

What's the State of Praise in the High School Classroom?

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What's the State of Praise in the High School Classroom?

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&

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By the end of this presentation you should be able to:

1. **Explain the difference between general praise, behavior-specific praise (BSP), and other forms of verbal feedback.**
2. **Characterize and assess your own habits of providing BSP and feedback in the classroom.**
3. **Choose which of several research-based methods of increasing BSP you might apply in the classroom.**

Early Adolescent Development: Cognition and Intellect

- **Improved ability to use speech to express one's self**
- **Tendency to return to childish behavior, particularly when stressed**
- **Mostly interested in present, with limited thoughts of the future**
- **Intellectual interests expand and gain in importance**
- **Greater ability to do work (physical, mental, emotional)**

Later Adolescent Development: Cognition & Intellect

- **Increased independent functioning**
- **Firmer and more cohesive sense of identity**
- **Examination of inner experiences**
- **Ability to think ideas through**
- **Increased ability for delayed gratification and compromise**
- **Increased emotional stability**
- **Work habits become more defined**
- **Increased concern for the future**
- **More importance is placed on one's role in life**
- **Greater capacity for setting goals**
- **Interest in moral reasoning**
- **Capacity to use insight**

Across Adolescence Development: Interactions with Adults

- **Begin to expect to have a say in their environment and learning**
- **Need to develop a voice in policy decisions**
- **Not all students/student groupings get heard**
- **Need to experience mutual respect**
- **Need to develop individual responsibility**
- **Their vocabulary becomes more sophisticated and complex**

PBIS and Middle/High Schools

Existing Research & Research Directions



- **SWPBIS Randomized Control Trials**
 - Elementary schools = 4
 - Middle schools = 1
- **Efficacy data are limited for high school but 20% reduction in office referrals was found by year 3 in Bohannon et al., 2006, in an urban high school.**
- **2nd Tier interventions:**
 - Behavior Education Program (middle school; Crone, Horner, & Hawken, 2004)
 - Check & Connect (middle & high school; Sinclair, Christenson, Evelo, & Hurley, 1998; Sinclair, Christenson, & Thurlow, 2005)
 - Trusted adult to connect with (AM: set daily goal)
 - Feedback/check provided by every teacher
 - Trusted adult to connect with (PM: review progress)
- **2nd Tier interventions likely need to be more academically focused, increase student motivation, & teach organizational and study skills (Bohannon et al., 2009)**
- **3rd Tier research is rooted in disability research (especially E/BD)**
- **Deterrents: large, highly departmentalized schools; different kinds of behavior difficulties (e.g., tardiness to class)**

School Climate: Relationships (*Social Support – Adults*)

“...the pattern of **supportive** and **caring** adult relationships for students...includes the nature of **expectations** for students’ success, willingness to listen to students and to get to know them as individuals, and personal concern for students’ problems...”

National School Climate Center

http://www.schoolclimate.org/guidelines/interpersonal_relationships.php

GSHS II: School-level data from 2008-2012



With higher school climate scores,
significant positive effects were noted in:

- Math achievement
- All other subjects
- Decreasing disciplinary incidents
- Decreasing suspension
- Increasing attendance

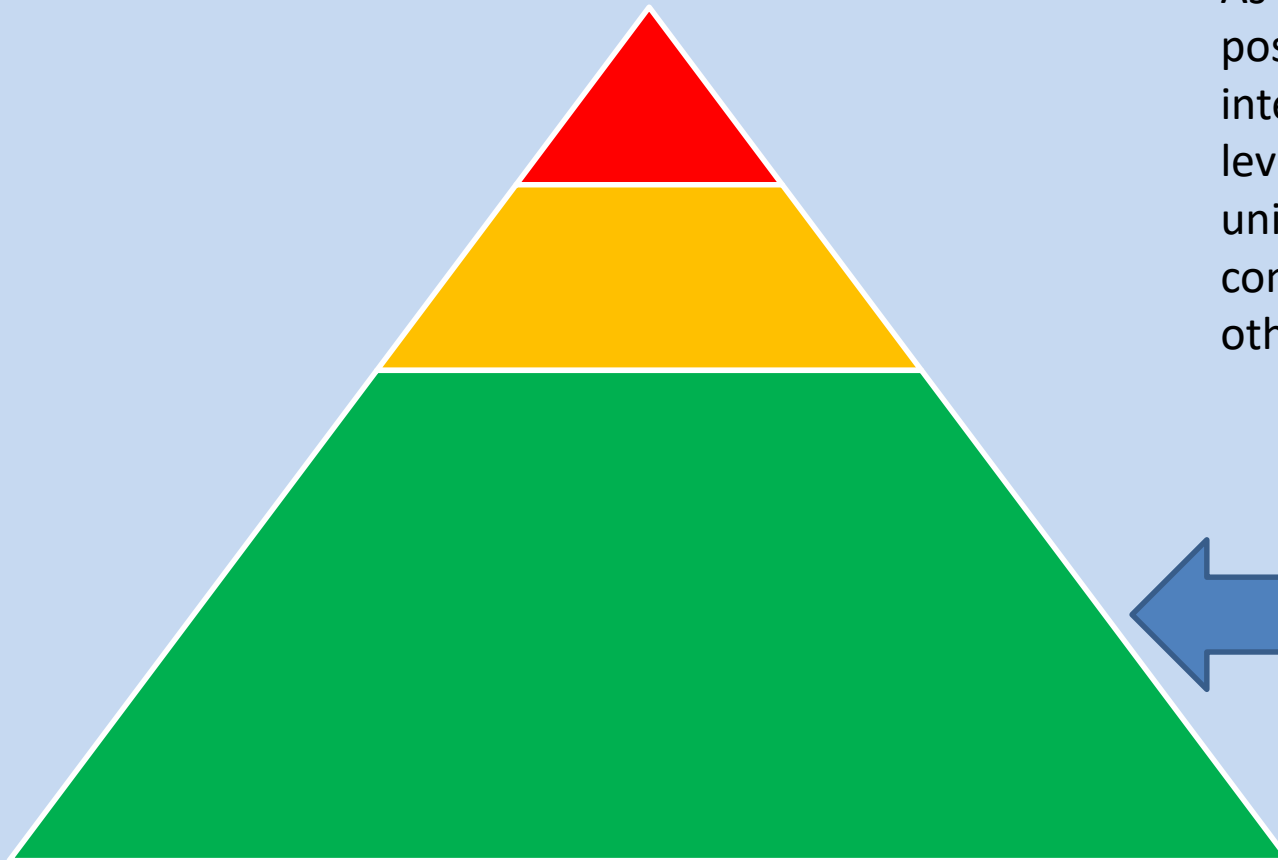
Effects were constant through high school

Possible Adult Beliefs Toward Adolescents & Expected Behavior

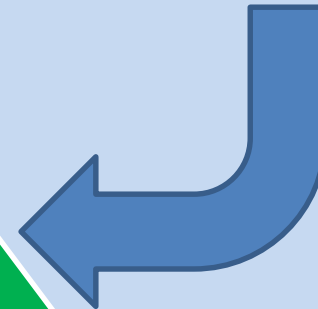
- **“They should be doing it anyway.”**
[behaving according to expectations]
- **“That’s not the way the real world works.”**
[when rewards are provided]
- **“They know how to behave.”**
- **“They *should* know how to behave.”**
- **“They don’t care what I think.”**

(Bohannon et al., 2009, p. 588; Brophy, 1981)

PBIS Pyramid



As I'm targeting it, establishing positive teacher-student interaction is important at all levels, but begins at the universal level (Tier 1), with a continuous call to use it at all other levels.



Practical PBIS Teacher Behaviors When Teaching Adolescents

1. Teach expected behaviors
2. **Increase Behavior-Specific Praise universally**
3. Implement Choice-Making

Behavior-Specific Praise

- 1. Contingency:** The praise must be contingent on performance of the behavior to be reinforced.
- 2. Specificity:** The praise should specify the particulars of the behavior being reinforced.
- 3. Sincerity/variety/credibility:** The praise should sound sincere. Among other things, this means that the content will be varied according to the situation and the preferences of the student being praised.
- 4. *...but will high school students value it...?***

(Brophy, 1981)

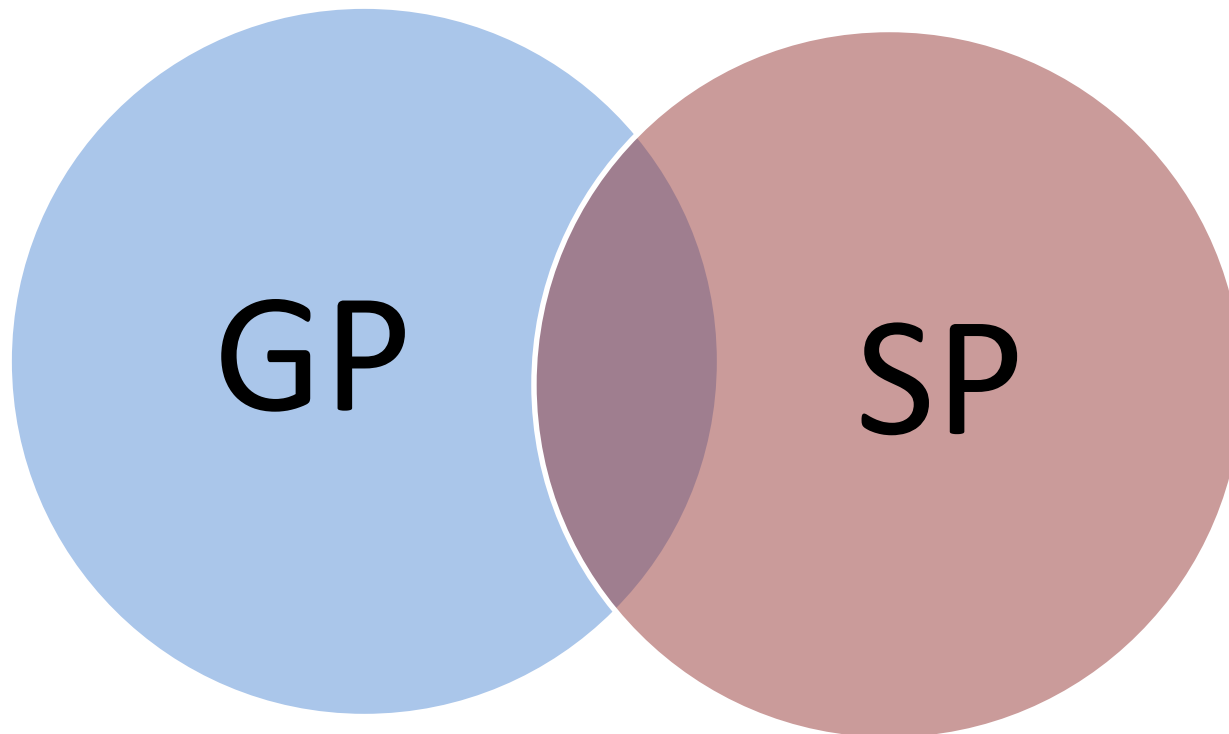
Behavior Specific Praise (BSP or SP)

Four Elements Every Time:

- ***Preferably:* states the student's name**
- **Statement of approval or positive acknowledgment**
- **Explanation of the exhibited behavior**
- **Genuine care and sincerity**

Objective: Explain

Turn to you neighbor and explain the similarities and differences between general praise and specific praise.

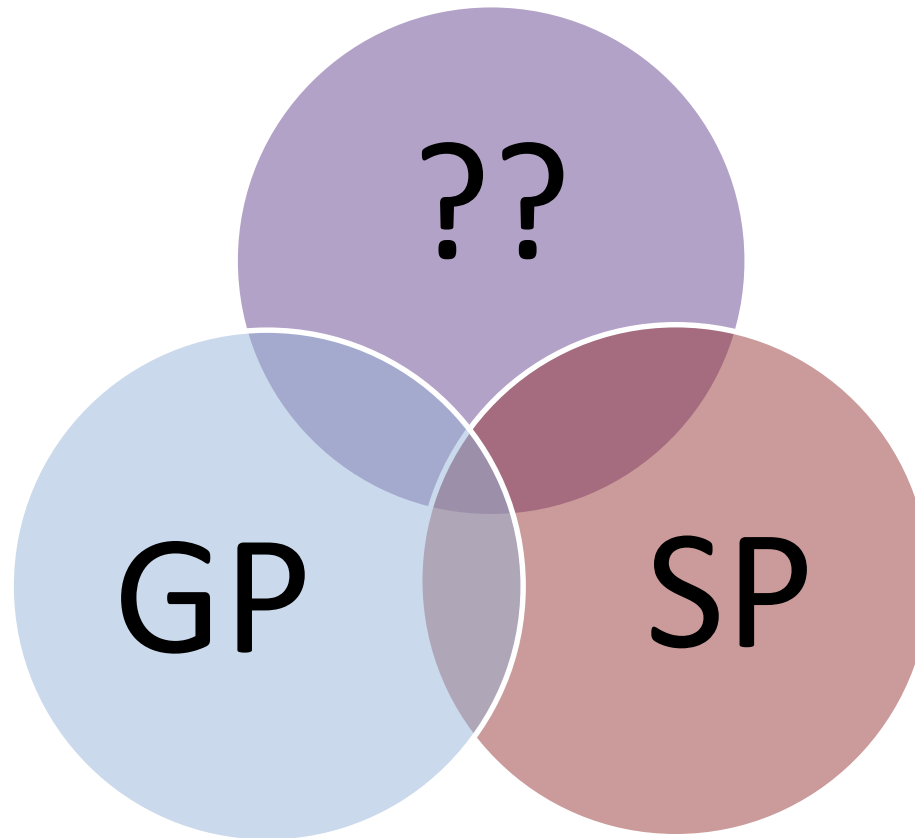


Possible areas to consider:

Purpose?
Effects?
Strengths?
Drawbacks?
Effort required?
...?

Objective: Explain

Identify one additional form of *verbal feedback*, and explain the similarities and differences when you take that into account as well.



Possible areas to consider:

Purpose?
Effects?
Strengths?
Drawbacks?
Effort required?
...?

PBIS strives for a ratio of 5 positive to 1 corrective statements in adult-student interactions...

...but this is the exception across grade levels.

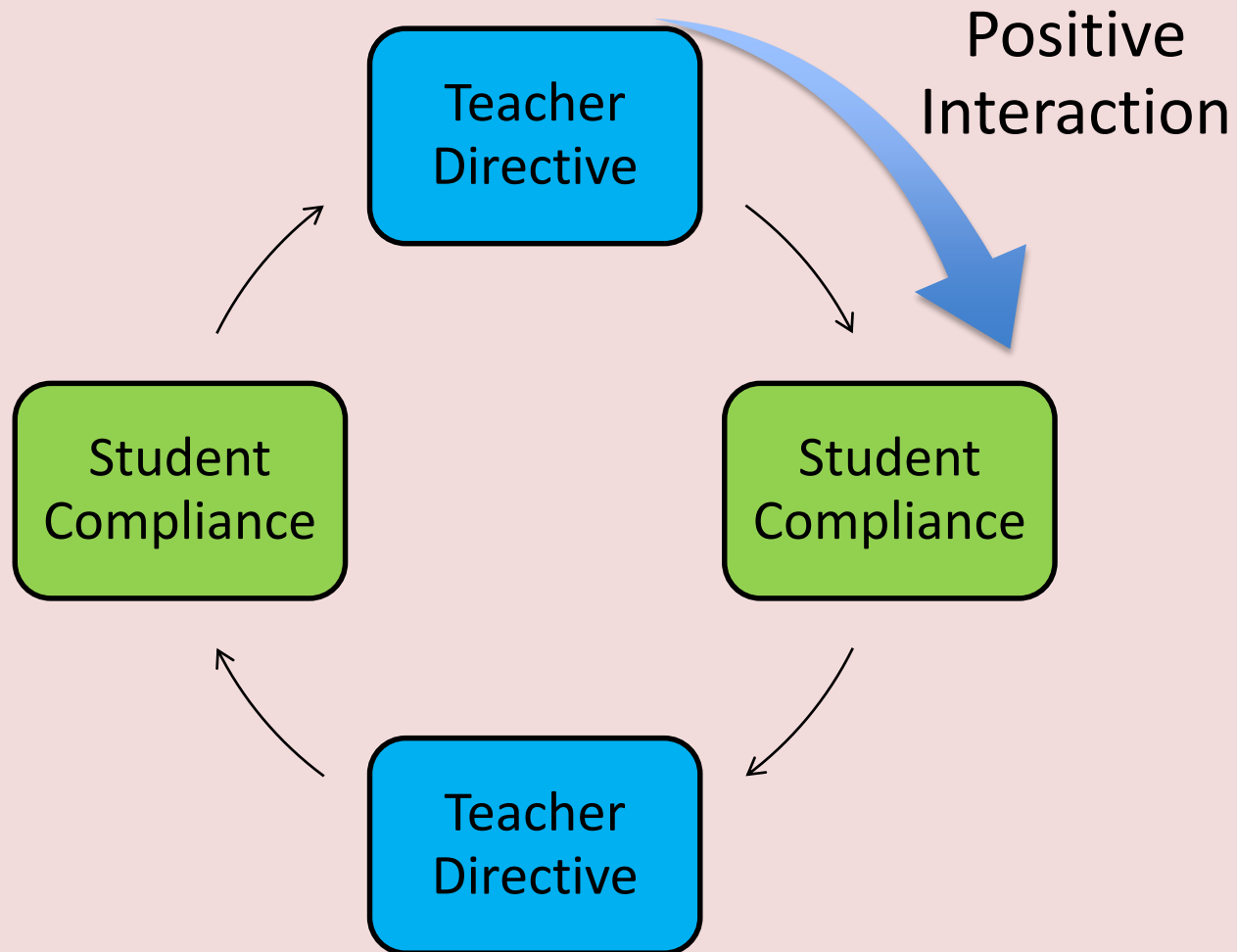
(Bohannon et al., 2009)

Typical Teacher-Student Interaction Cycle

Shores, R. E., Jack, S. L., Gunter, P. L., & Ellis, D. N. (1993). Classroom interactions of children with behavior disorders. *Journal Of Emotional And Behavioral Disorders*, 1(1), 27-39.

- **Observed 19 classrooms; each with 2 students with Severe Emotional/Behavior Disorders (some inclusion, some separate settings)**
- **Developed a mathematical model of the most probable series of interactions between (all) students and teachers:**

A Positive Cycle



A Closer Look at the Teachers

Very rarely did teachers give positive attention even for desired behaviors such as:

- Compliance to teacher's commands
- Completion of tasks
- Following rules
- Raising hands to ask for help

So Much Time; So Little Praise

Researchers consistently have observed very low rates of praise ranging from less than 1 to less than 3 per hour.

(Shores & Jack, 1993; Van Acker et al., 1996; Wehby, Symons, & Shores, 1995)

Stuckey's Math Class

Student(s)	Behavior By the Student(s)	Statement by the Teacher	Student Response(s)
Janet	answered a math problem correctly	"Janet, you really took yesterday's lesson to heart and answered in a thoughtful manner."	smiled; additional students volunteered answers
Aaron	Aaron asked, "Could you please close the door? The noise is bothering us."	"You handled that well, Aaron. Thank you."	that side of the classroom paid better attention
Whole class	refrained from laughing when Andy made an error at the board	"Nice job keeping calm and supporting Andy, class."	Andy finished the problem and the class moved smoothly to the next activity
A group of several students	waited for other students to catch up	"I like the way you guys are being patient. Thank you."	remained quiet
Walter	explained a math problem correctly using an illustration from his life	"Walter, I like the way you used the explanation of how you did that when you were a kid."	"I'm a HERO!"

Objective: Characterize

Think to yourself:

If someone came to your classroom, what habits of praise and feedback would they observe?

Increase Teacher Praise

What could you do to increase your use of SP in your class?

Let's see what the research says about high school teachers and increasing SP:

Hint:

6 Studies.

Total.

Ever.

Then, we'll do some reasonable speculation.

- **Elementary, middle, and high school classrooms**
- **Expert consultation**
- **Teacher self-evaluation**
- **Unclear how each element contributed separately to the increases in SP**
- **Different instructional techniques used at different grades – does that affect how much teachers praise?**
- **Researchers did the videotaping**
- **Recommend video more than two sessions per week**

Duchaine et al., 2011

- **High school classrooms**
- **Inclusive/co-teaching general education classrooms**
- **Coaching**
- **Performance feedback**
- **Researchers came and observed 15 minutes**
- **Teachers set goals for themselves**

Hawkins & Heflin, 2011

- **High school classrooms**
- **Severe behavior classroom**
- **Video self-modeling**
- **Visual performance feedback**
- **Researchers came and observed 10 minutes**
- **Researchers set goals for teachers**
- **Time-intensive video and feedback process**

Simonsen et al., 2010

- Middle and high school classrooms
- Severe behavior classroom
- Training modules
- Performance feedback
- Teacher-selected self-management strategies
- Researchers came and observed 10-15 minutes
- Different kinds of self-management should be examined systematically because it wasn't clear how the different selections impacted the outcomes.
- Daily feedback was too intense to provide

Kalis et al., 2007

- **High school classrooms**
- **Teacher self-monitoring**
- **Researchers came and observed 10 minutes**
- **Teachers and researchers mutually decided on goals**
- **Did not require reliance on outside personnel (but sacrificed observational accuracy)**

Pinter et al., 2015

- Middle and high school classrooms
- Multiple/severe disability classrooms
- Teacher-directed performance feedback (“natural implementers”)
- Teachers videoed three 15-minute sessions per week
- Trained teachers to document and evaluate their own praise using classroom recordings
- Teachers set goals for themselves
- Teachers who predominantly lecture (with few opportunities for student response & small amounts of student talk) demonstrated the least growth
- Teachers reported the process was reasonable and could be used to study other things besides SP
- Recommended a journal or checklist or other self-reflection also

Reasonable Speculation: Invite a Peer into Your Classroom to Count

Student(s)	Behavior By the Student(s)	Statement by the Teacher	Student Response(s)
Janet	answered a math problem correctly	"Janet, you really took yesterday's lesson to heart and answered in a thoughtful manner."	smiled; additional students volunteered answers
Aaron	Aaron asked, "Could you please close the door? The noise is bothering us."	"You handled that well, Aaron. Thank you."	that side of the classroom paid better attention
Whole class	refrained from laughing when Andy made an error at the board	"Nice job keeping calm and supporting Andy, class."	Andy finished the problem and the class moved smoothly to the next activity
A group of several students	waited for other students to catch up	"I like the way you guys are being patient. Thank you."	remained quiet
Walter	explained a math problem correctly using an illustration from his life	"Walter, I like the way you used the explanation of how you did that when you were a kid."	"I'm a HERO!"

Reasonable Speculation: Increase the Likelihood of Praise Worthy Student Behaviors

- **Select 3-5 behavioral expectations**
- **Teach them “directly and continuously”**
- **In co-teaching settings, agree on behavioral expectations and co-plan how to teach them**

(Sugai & Horner, 2009, p. 312)

Reasonable Speculation: Teach Expected Behaviors Systematically & Directly

- **Use a lesson plan**
- **Define**
 1. Real behavioral examples:
 - Observable
 - Relevant
 - Doable
 2. Purpose is to develop an efficient, shared **vocabulary** where every member of the group understands and can implement the desired behavior.
 3. Possible format: behavior matrix
- **Model**
- **Practice**
- **Give corrective and positive feedback**
- **Encourage use in the real-life classroom**

Reasonable Speculation: State Your Behavioral Expectations...

...at the Beginning Of Every Class Period

- **30-60 second reminder routine**
- **PPT or smart board slide; visible poster**
- **Give expectations at the beginning of every kind of transition (forces you to develop distinct routines & procedures)**
- **You can clarify when and why the expectations shift from activity to activity**
ex: testing days: “Everyone deserves to feel like they’re the first one finished.”
Reteach the behavior every time for more rare activities
- **There may be a cognitive priming factor at work for both you and your students when you state your expectations first**

Reasonable Speculation: Choice-Making

- Studied in the context of severe behaviors by researchers (some of whom are associated with PBIS)
- “a verbal statement or gesture from the teacher that identifies two or more response options an individual may make under specific conditions” (Jolivette et al., 2001)
- *"Which one do you want? Your choice."* (Peck, et al. 1996)
- For some students, the ability to choose between two options that are both acceptable to the adult may result in positive interactions and outcomes and serve as a reinforcer itself

Possible Benefits of Choice-Making

- **Attends to student preference**
- **May increase predictability of the student's environment despite ever-changing academic demands**
- **Can provide overt opportunities for positive teacher-student interactions**
- **May increase student opportunity for positive teacher attention**

(Jolivette et al., 2001)

Establish a Choice-Making Routine

Six-step method used by Jolivette et al., 2001:

We followed the six-step method suggested by Sigafoos, Roberts, Couzens, and Kerr (1993) in this study. The six steps are as follows:

1. Offer the individual two or more options.
2. Ask the individual to make a choice.
3. Provide wait time for the individual to make his or her choice.
4. Wait for the individual's response.
5. Reinforce with the option chosen (i.e., give the item to the individual).
6. If the individual does not make a choice, prompt the individual to choose from the provided options.

Establishing a choice-making script or routine increases predictability in students' environment, which will improve the probability of behavioral success for some students who don't easily "pick up" on social or contextual behavioral cues from the teacher.

Types of Choice	Examples for Secondary Classroom
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where – Location of work or play • When – Time student will begin to work • Within – specific materials the child needs to complete work • Who– who will student work with • Between/Among – What the student is going to work on • Terminate – time work will stop • Future – what the student will work on in the future • Tangible – specific items student needs prior to, during, or after working • Refusal – whether or not to begin/finish work • Alternative – the method the child will use to complete the working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student can work in the front of the classroom or near the back • Student can take a short break before beginning work, or begin as soon as it is received • Student is provided with different color pens and markers or other materials to complete an assignment • Student can work with a choice between 2 students or work alone • Student can begin assignment 1 then start assignment 2 upon completion • Student can decide when to stop work to take a short break • Student can choose the next 2 assignments to complete • Student can use white, purple or yellow construction paper to complete a collage • During a classroom review game, student can choose to play along or not participate. • Student can choose to write a summary of a text, turn it into a play, or create a collage retelling the text

Reasonable Speculation: Opportunities to Respond

- **OTRs represent STUDENT opportunities to respond to the content, the teacher, or their peers**
- **Usually involves checking for student understanding**

Low OTRs:

One-at-a-time responses

Lots of teacher talk & lecture

High OTRs:

Choral response & class-wide signals

Response cards (and e-response systems)

Turn & talk, think pair share, peer or group work

Objective: Choose

**Think to yourself:
Which approach (or
combo) to
increasing your SP
sounds most
(appealing,
reasonable,
achievable) to you
and could have the
greatest impact in
your classroom?**

1. Peer observer
2. Video self-evaluation
3. Video self-modeling
4. Training modules
5. Expert coaching
6. Performance feedback (graph or tallies)
7. Outside goals for SP
8. Self-selected goals for SP
9. Self-monitoring (clicker or tallies...)
10. Interval signals (beeper/earpiece/phone on vibrate...)
11. Self-reflection with journal or checklist
12. Teach expected behaviors directly
13. Prompt students for expectations every day/period
14. Choice-making
15. Increase OTRs

We addressed in this presentation:

1. **The difference between general praise, behavior-specific praise (SP), and other forms of verbal feedback**
2. **Habits of providing SP and feedback in the classroom**
3. **Research-based methods of increasing SP you might apply in the classroom (plus some reasonable speculation)**

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